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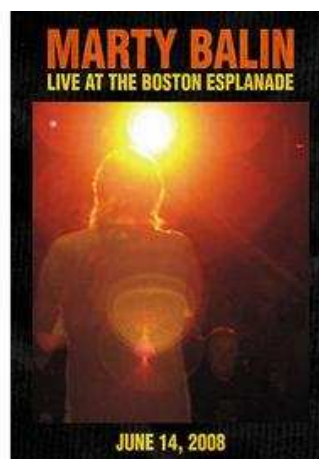
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Marty Balin – Live At The Boston Esplanade, June 14, 2008 (MVD Visual DVD)

Picture: C- Sound: C
Extras: C Concert: C+



As a member of Jefferson Airplane, Marty Balin ran with the band until 1971, then returned by the mid-1970s when they reinvented themselves as Jefferson Starship. In this, Balin proved to be a more prominent singer/songwriter creating most of their major hits in this period including *Runaway*, *Count On Me* and *Miracles*. All were ballads that were Adult Contemporary friendly and songs that still retained a Rock backbone. Solo by 1981, he added *Hearts*, a hit single every bit as savvy as anything he made with them and better than anything out of their awful Starship era he luckily skipped.

Marty Balin – Live At The Boston Esplanade, June 14, 2008 has Balin giving a decent if short concert where you can still tell it is his voice, losing only a little of its smoothness. In addition, he is there to play with his band and they deliver long versions of the hits above plus a five other hits including a few Airplane classics. I was hoping for some surprises, but was not totally disappointed and Balin shows he knows his audience, has his showmanship and can deliver the classics he made work so well. If you like his hits, you'll want to see this one.

The letterboxed 1.78 X 1 image is much softer throughout than I would have liked. We get some good close shots, but the vast majority of shots are long shots and they are just too flat and muddy. Color is also an issue. The Dolby Digital 5.1 and Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo mixes are also underwhelming, with the 5.1 barely playing better. Extras include a long interview with Balin that offers bonus performances throughout.

- Nicholas Sheffo

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